

## **FRAMING AGNES**

### **Preliminary Press Kit**

#### **Logline**

After discovering case files from a 1950s gender clinic, a cast of trans actors turn a talk show inside out to confront the legacy of a young trans woman forced to choose between honesty and access.

#### **Still Image**

Available [here](#)

Credit: Ava Benjamin Shorr

#### **Pitch Synopsis**

In 1958, a young trans woman named Agnes entered a study about sex disorders at UCLA to get the gender-affirming care she needed, by any means necessary. Her story was long considered to be exceptional until never-before-seen case files of other patients were found in 2017. Directed by Chase Joynt (NO ORDINARY MAN) and featuring an all-star cast of transgender artists and actors, FRAMING AGNES uses re-enactment and genre-blurring storytelling techniques to breathe new life into previously unknown people who redefined gender in the midcentury. Featuring Angelica Ross, Jen Richards, Zackary Drucker, Silas Howard, Max Wolf Valerio, and Stephen Ira.

#### **Social**

Website [framingagnes.com](http://framingagnes.com)  
Instagram [@framing.agnes](https://www.instagram.com/framing.agnes)  
Twitter [@framing\\_agnes](https://twitter.com/framing_agnes)  
Email [team@framingagnes.com](mailto:team@framingagnes.com)

#### **Filmmaker Bio**

Chase Joynt is a director and writer whose films have won awards internationally. With Aisling Chin-Yee, Chase co-directed *No Ordinary Man*, a feature-length documentary about jazz musician Billy Tipton. Since premiering at TIFF in 2020, *No Ordinary Man* has been hailed by *The New Yorker* as “a genre unto itself” and *Indiewire* as “the future of trans cinema.”

Chase Joynt headshot available [here](#)

Credit: Wynne Neilly

## **Credits**

Director	Chase Joynt
Screenwriter	Chase Joynt Morgan M Page
Producer	Shant Joshi Chase Joynt
Executive Producers	Samantha Curley Morgan M. Page
Co-Executive Producers	Brooke Stern Sebold Jules Gill-Peterson
Principal Cast	Angelica Ross Jen Richards Zackary Drucker Max Wolf Valerio Silas Howard Stephen Ira
Featuring	Jules Gill-Peterson
Researcher	Kristen Schilt
Cinematography	Aubree Bernier-Clarke
Additional Cinematography	Ava Benjamin Shorr
Editing	Brooke Stern Sebold Cecilio Escobar

## **Sundance Information**

Year	2022
Category	NEXT
Country	Canada, USA
Run time	75
Festivals	The Film Collaborative ( <a href="https://www.thefilmcollaborative.org">https://www.thefilmcollaborative.org</a> )
Contact	Jeffrey Winter - <a href="mailto:jeffrey@thefilmcollaborative.org">jeffrey@thefilmcollaborative.org</a>
Sales	United Talent agency
Contact	John McGrath - <a href="mailto:McGrathJ@unitedtalent.com">McGrathJ@unitedtalent.com</a>

## **Director Statement**

Presenting one person's story, rather than a story about a group, is a common storytelling method in medical and media histories of trans people. For example, the 1993 murder of Brandon Teena – as depicted in Kimberley Pierce's *Boys Don't Cry* (1999) – remains a touchpoint of both news media and Hollywood attention. Similarly, Christine Jorgensen's interviews on early talk shows in the 1950s are still referenced as the singular turning point in televised trans history. In these stories, trans people are positioned in isolation – untethered from community and family – and therefore ever-vulnerable to harm and exploitation. In reality, trans communities have been navigating and world-building together behind the scenes since before “trans” was a thing. Isolation was, in fact, a narrative produced and patrolled by medicine and the media. Representation of trans and gender nonconforming communities has changed dramatically in the last decade. *Framing Agnes* emerges as an incisive opportunity to both acknowledge social change and remember the formative, often flawed makings of history. Our project is emboldened by a team of artists motivated to blur the lines between fiction and nonfiction, past and present, in pursuit of a more expansive and nuanced future.

## **Sundance Statement**

Agnes, the pioneering, pseudonymized, transgender woman who participated in Harold Garfinkel's gender health research at UCLA in the 1960s, has long stood as a figurehead of trans history. In this rigorous cinematic exercise that blends fiction and nonfiction, director Chase Joynt explores where and how her platform has become a pigeonhole. *Framing Agnes* endeavors to widen the frame through which trans history is viewed — one that has remained too narrow to capture the multiplicity of experiences eclipsed by Agnes'. Through a collaborative practice of reimagination, an impressive lineup of trans stars (Zackary Drucker, Angelica Ross, Jen Richards, Max Wolf Valerio, Silas Howard, and Stephen Ira) take on vividly rendered, impeccably vintage reenactments, bringing to life groundbreaking artifacts of trans healthcare.

Joynt's signature form-rupturing style radically reenvision the imposition of the frame on the cultural memory of transness through his brilliantly crafted, communally-driven excavation. This reclamation tears away with remarkable precision the myth of isolation as the mode of existence of transgender history-makers, breathing new life into a lineage of collaborators and conspirators who have been forgotten for far too long.